



Prospectus: Wake Works

Wake Technical Community College is pleased to submit its proposal for the new “Wake Works” program to the Wake County Board of Commissioners. **Wake Works would advance our shared mission to improve and enrich the lives of Wake County residents by providing tuition-free education to students studying to join critical-need professions.** Consistent with the Commissioners’ goal of making community college more affordable (Goal E 1.5), this would help ensure that we can meet the educational and workforce development needs of the county while equipping individuals and families with the tools they need to succeed.

Three Needs: Skilled Professionals, College Affordability, and Economic Opportunity

The Wake Works program is built to tackle three challenges:



First, Wake County is seeing an acute shortage of skilled professionals, hampering several of our key industries. In recent months, many of Wake Tech’s strategic partners—including Duke Energy, Cree, Caterpillar, Bolton Construction, and Wake County government itself—have expressed concern that current workforce strategies may not resolve labor shortages in many of the skilled trades. This is a refrain echoed statewide. Wake Tech is uniquely poised to assist with this challenge.

Simply put, the supply of skilled tradespeople is not keeping pace with demand. After decades of emphasizing bachelor's degrees, both the Triangle and our state as a whole need more skilled professionals. Baby Boomers are retiring from their jobs in construction, manufacturing, masonry, carpentry, and engineering, while younger generations are either struggling for work or looking for jobs outside of these industries. Based on employment projections from the North Carolina Department of Commerce, over 60,000 skilled trades jobs will need to be filled by the year 2024. While some trades require an Associate's Degree, others only require short-term training prior to employment.

Helping recruit or redirect talent to available, high-paying, skilled-labor jobs is an expressed outcome of Wake Works that will have a deep impact on the local and state economy. With the county's help, this promise scholarship will encourage students to consider careers in the skilled trades by removing financial barriers to success.

Second, rising education costs are combining with an increasing cost of living and other social and economic pressures to prevent residents from getting the education they need to succeed. Across the nation, the cost of public colleges and universities has shifted from state governments to students. In the last twenty years, the average inflation-adjusted public college tuition has risen by 281 percent (Budget and Policy Priorities, 2017). Additionally, college tuition increases have risen at a faster rate than financial aid and family income (College Board, 2017). With inflationary and market-driven cost-of-living increases, higher education pursuits are being postponed, prolonged, or considered "optional." Community colleges like Wake Tech have become the attractive option for students and families who want to pursue higher education without the exorbitant price tag.

However, financial need is still an issue for many prospective students, who currently bear tuition, fees, and other costs associated with attending college. Nearly 30% of Wake Tech's students received Pell Grants or other need-based financial loan assistance in the 2018-2019 academic year. However, federal funding and financial aid do not entirely close the gap, with many poor and working-class students either struggling to make ends meet or opting not to come to Wake Tech altogether. Only 50% of students can afford to attend college full-time, slowing their entry into the workforce. This is why Wake Works is all the more essential in removing barriers to accessing high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand occupations.

Third, individuals and families struggling to achieve upward mobility need help. Education is a cornerstone of economic opportunity. However, there is a significant dearth of training resources that can help people quickly get into well-paying jobs. Not only will Wake Works help workers become competitive, but Wake Tech will work with Wake County's numerous public, private, and nonprofit sector partners to publicize the program among underprivileged populations and provide another tool to those working to implement preexisting programs. While shattering stereotypes that skilled trades are "dirty jobs" may require a cultural rebranding, Wake Works would better enable Wake Tech to humanize, highlight and destigmatize our students' stories while using them as case studies for those considering a job in one of these key fields.

Sources Cited:

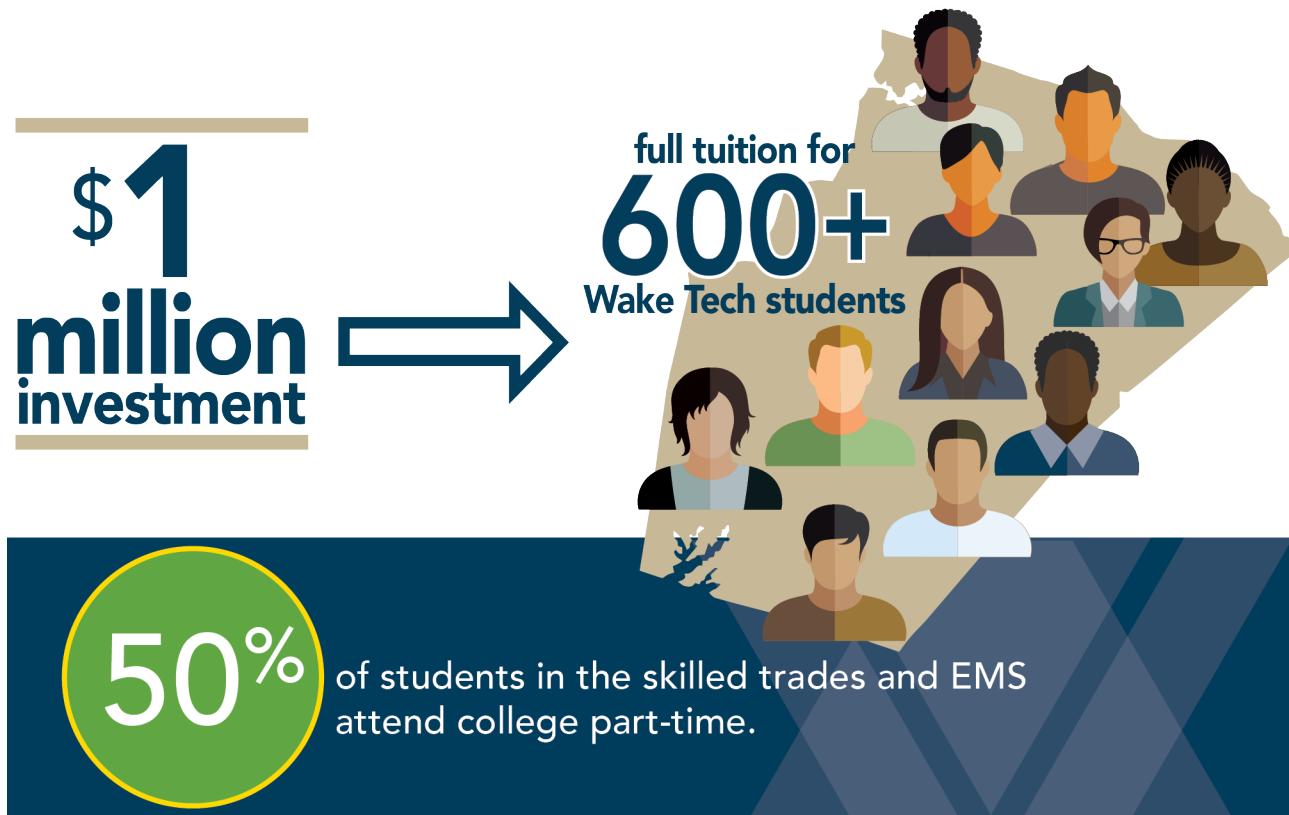
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How It Works

Wake County's investment of \$1 million annually would enable Wake Tech to provide full-tuition scholarships to students in seven profession areas (see table below). A thorough review of available data has shown that Wake County is seeing a critical shortage of tradespeople in each of these seven professions, and Wake Tech has the capacity to serve more students in each program. In addition, Wake County government is experiencing a shortage of EMS professionals and has identified the need to hire several dozen more in order to maintain its high quality of EMS service.

Associate in Applied Science Programs	Current Students	Wake County Median Salary
Air Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration	133	\$44,239
Electrical Systems	95	\$39,755
Emergency Medical Science	55	\$35,082
Heavy Equipment Repair/Operation	3	\$44,042
Mechanical Engineering	109	\$53,752
Plumbing	23	\$42,549
Welding	128	\$38,068
Total Spring 2019 Students	546	



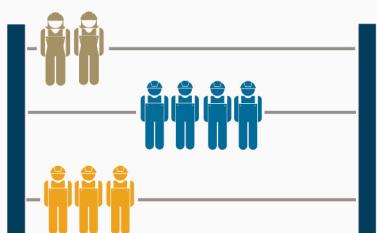
As a "last dollar scholarship," the Wake Works program would require students to make full use of Pell Grants and other available financial aid and scholarships. This helps to maximize our use of federal funding and ensure local tax dollars stretch as far as possible. Wake Works would be open to anyone who has lived in Wake County for more than one year and who otherwise qualifies for matriculation into Wake Tech. Enrolled students must maintain a 2.0 GPA in one of the qualifying Associate's Degree or certificate programs.

Wake Technical Community College Spring 2019 Tuition & Fees*

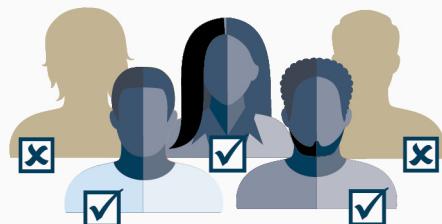
Credit Hours	Tuition	Computer Use/Tech Fee	Student Activity/Athletics Fee	Campus Access Fee	Total
In-State Tuition					
16 or more	\$1,216.00	\$48.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$1,384.00
15	\$1,140.00	\$45.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$1,305.00
14	\$1,064.00	\$42.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$1,226.00
13	\$988.00	\$39.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$1,147.00
12	\$912.00	\$36.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$1,068.00
11	\$836.00	\$33.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$989.00
10	\$760.00	\$30.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$910.00
9	\$684.00	\$27.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$831.00
8	\$608.00	\$24.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$752.00
7	\$532.00	\$21.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$673.00
6	\$456.00	\$18.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$594.00
5	\$380.00	\$15.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$515.00
4	\$304.00	\$12.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$436.00
3	\$228.00	\$9.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$357.00
2	\$152.00	\$6.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$278.00
1	\$76.00	\$3.00	\$35.00	\$85.00	\$199.00

How We'll Measure Success

Wake Works will be deemed successful when there are measurable increases in the following:



Number and diversity of new students, particularly 18-22 year olds



Full-time attendance



Retention through year two of the associate's degree with a 2.0 GPA or higher



Completion of certificates and degrees



Placement in Wake County's workforce